

Stranded

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Summary: They were on a journey to an upcoming show holding at the very south of America, although it was held at someplace further away from their hometown. They had been travelling for almost one whole day in their movie truck thus far, only for the engine to suddenly break down along the trip.

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As hours pass by of taking numerous photos and updating their blog frequently, they spent most of their time stopping at various malls and thus collecting brand new outfits. As of course, they always wanted to look their very best for the road ahead. They were on a journey to an upcoming musical holding at the very south of America, although it was held at someplace further away from their hometown. They had been travelling for almost one whole day in their movie truck thus far, only for the engine to suddenly break down along the trip. Yasmin assumed it was possibly due to the length of the journey which encouraged such a faulty to happen. They were stranded in the middle of nowhere, within a foreign town, an abandoned wasteland to be exact. Nobody other than an old man was present within the area, and he surprisingly offered to help repair the truck's engine. Sasha suspected something shady about the old man's offer, as well as Jade. On the other hand, Cloe was silently pleading for another way to the show. The four teenage girls stepped out of their truck shortly after accepting the old man's offer, although with a look of worry plastered upon their faces. It was during the early evening, it was already dark outside, and not to mention the show was due to begin in a few hours or so. There had to be another way to travel to the show, as Cloe hoped.

Perhaps this old man could help them?

"This town is dying faster than frogs on a freeway. What's your business here, kids?" The old man grunted miserably, standing with his back arched somewhat. "Car troubles, eh? Well now I'm known 'round here as something of a handyman, but don't believe anything

else you hear." Turning to face the truck's bonnet, he soon lifted the hood whilst still puffing from his cigar, dropping his stare down towards the engine within. "That engine's got more holes than a doughnut shop. This might take a while to mend, a few days maybe."

"...I wonder if there's actually a doughnut store nearby." Cloe mumbled, already feeling her stomach rumble at the mere thought of it.

"Seriously, is that all you're thinking about?" Sasha complained, positioning a hand against her hip. "We're in a crisis here, Angel! Snap out of it!"

"...Sorry, Bunny Boo..." Cloe grumbled, folding her slender arms over her chest now, a little huff escaping her lips.

"There's a hotel just over there, you could secure yourselves a bed for the meantime. It's nothing fancy, but I hear they've got pillows at least." The old man cackled somewhat as he stated, still staring towards the truck's busted machine. "Though I sure hope it ain't too dull for you lot." He added, sardonically. He clearly noted their fashionable outfits for the planned show tonight, although he had no idea what Bratz magazine was.

The town was small, albeit lonesome. There was a city hall residing in the west, along with a saloon and a box-shaped prison. Within the north resided a small corner shop, and in the east was the previously mentioned hotel. In the south of the town there was a cattle ranch, and also an entrance to a vast desert. The four girls reached this small town by travelling throughout the nearby desert, and they were simply amazed by just how cold the town appeared to be compared to the heat of the desert's temperature.

"Wait... what about the show?!" Cloe questioned, worrying.

"Well, we would have to miss it now, sadly..." Jade responded, shortly before inching closer towards the hunched up blonde beside her. "...Unless you're willing to travel there by foot." Jade suggested jokingly, placing a palm onto Cloe's shoulder, giving it a faint pat as she did so. "But don't look so beat up about it, Angel, maybe it just wasn't the right time yet."

"Jade's right..." Yasmin agreed. "Maybe it wasn't our time yet... to perform in another city so distant from our hometown."

"Yeah, it's tough, but the show was miles away after all..." Sasha commented with a shrug, now folding her arms over her chest within moments. "Try to stay calm, Cloe, there will be other shows booked up for us in the future anyway. I'm sure Byron would understand."

"Shows, eh?" The old man interrupted. "No shows 'round here, but there is one place... it's closed down, unfortunately."

Destined to stay a few days in someplace foreign, an imminent Bratz show due to be cancelled in South America, and there was possibly no access to their blog page on the internet. Cloe felt like she was going to either faint or die even. She could feel a swarm of tears already waiting to burst, although she struggled to hold them back.

This was indeed a crisis, as Sasha previously stated. The twins, Kirstee and Kaycee, were most likely going to laugh spitefully at the situation the Bratz have driven themselves into. Oh no. What were Fianna, Phoebe, Roxxi, Katia, and the other girls going to think? They were planning to be present within the show's audience after all; Cloe remembered them mentioning it back at Stylesville.

What on earth were they going to do?!

Finally deciding to head over towards the nearby tavern located on the east side of the small settlement, the building appeared to be dark, even ghostly in fact. Nobody was present inside, not even the old man. The building was lifeless as a whole, and the very few light switches within the extent did not even bother to give power to the single bulb fixed upon the ceiling. Ahead appeared to be a staircase, two in fact, they were attached together and forming an archway. On the upper platform was an elevator, although sadly out of power due to the lack of electricity. This hotel was not at all luxurious, as the old man mentioned before. However, this hotel was also not suitable for any form of life to rest in. Cloe's lips merely trembled at the mere sight of the filthy hotel lobby, glancing at the many cobwebs here and there, covering her mouth with a few fingertips in disbelief.

What the heck was this man offering them? Was there any food at all? Were there warm, comfy beds to sleep in? Was there even showers? Or, was there even a manager running this abandoned building? Of course, they could just rest in their movie truck for the time being, although unfortunately there was only a stage inside the train of it and not actual supplies.

"Did he seriously suggest this place to us?" Cloe frowned, still worrying. "...It's really creepy, you know."

"This whole thing is creepy!"

"Oh, it totally is. But was he hoping we sort out this dump, or something?" Sasha questioned, faintly shaking her head in disapproval at the thought of it, glancing about the main lobby in disgust.
"There's no way that's happening!"

"Hey, look!" Yasmin pointed towards a glowing green fuel rod further on, followed by three more bars which led to a single door, the doorway to the basement to be exact. "Maybe there could be a power source downstairs? What do you think?"

"You mean there's one down... in the basement?" Sasha snapped, swiftly turning to face Yasmin with both her hands upon her hips now, her hazel-hued eyes only seeming to bulge with worry as she kept sight of the brunette female before her. Sasha was truly worried for this girl, even if she was her closest best-friend-for-life. "I have no idea what you're suggesting but you're on your own, Pretty Princess."

"Stay here, then!" Yasmin cracked a smirk, before approaching the nearby fuel rod and thus picking it up from the mucky floorboards. She was trying her hardest to think positive for the team at least, even if she hated touching dirt with her bare fingertips. Not to mention her nails were also painted just this morning.

"...I do hope there is a shower here at least... and a mirror too..." Cloe murmured, lightly looking towards the ground.

Down in the basement now, there appeared to be a trail of a few more fuel rods leading towards yet another door further on. Yasmin assumed a plan was behind this; otherwise these fuel rods would not be arranged in this sort of fashion. They would be scattered, they would be difficult to find, not neatly set out in a clear trail for one to follow. The furnace room was located ahead, Yasmin was sure of it. Jade followed behind sluggishly, shooting glimpses here and there as she slowly descended the small flight of steps heading south. Meanwhile, Sasha and Cloe waited in the main lobby for their return. Cloe silently pleaded for a good outcome, despite also worrying constantly.

"It sure is dark down here... way too dark..." Jade commented with a gulp, her voice was quivering, even quiet.

"It'll be fine; we will get through this if we stick together and work as a team." Yasmin stated.

As a few gradual moments ticked by bit by bit, the many light bulbs within the hotel were finally brightening up with long-lasting vibrancy, given that the power source was discovered at last. Yasmin smiled in relief, she was proud of herself, proud for actually putting effort into this one task. Not to forget she was also proud for doing the majority of the work within the team, even without being given the chore to do so. The old man never asked for Yasmin's help, not even Jade, Sasha, or Cloe's. Yasmin dealt with the power source willingly without being asked beforehand. However, the moment she finally rose from the concrete ground with a little huff escaping her lips, she suddenly heard a deafening scream hailing from upstairs.

"...W-Was that Angel?" Jade questioned, shooting a quick glance towards the basement door, worrying. Cloe was her closest best-friend-for-life after all, and Jade worried constantly about the girl.

"It sure sounded like her..."

Their suspicions were indeed correct; that one shrill scream was indeed Cloe. She stood outside of the elevator doors with a palm pressing against her forehead, another upon her hip, as she shook her head gradually whilst whimpering repeatedly. She was fed up, that was for sure. It was impossible for her to remain quiet for just one minute, let alone within this forsaken wasteland. Sasha merely rolled her hazel-coloured hues in contempt at the sight, chewing at her bottom lip as she did so; both her palms were still positioned against her hips as well. No matter how many times Sasha told Cloe that it would get better eventually, that this sudden crisis would end in a few days, Cloe still could not accept the fact that tonight's show in South America was due to be cancelled. She was excited for the show, before.

"Looks like there's gonna be another episode of Drama Mama..." Sasha groaned, averting her gaze elsewhere in annoyance.

"...What's wrong, Angel?"

"Well, ain't this something to tell Bratz magazine..."

There was no Fashion Promenade, Thrills with Frills, Struttin' Styles, or any familiar store or even mall within this forlorn settlement. Instead it was dull, bland, and took the appearance of a western musical. There were no stores present, no fashion stores, not even treat shops. Instead there were buildings with barricaded wooden doors, overgrown gardens, and broken glass used as windows. The only store was indeed the town's general stock up, which was an old corner shop located beside the supposed hotel. That was what mainly upset Cloe.

"There's no way I'm sleeping in this place..." Cloe whined, once again. "...I've just taken a look upstairs, there's only one room..."

"We can just share, right?"

"...I almost vomited when I looked!" Cloe snapped, responding to Sasha in a small tantrum now. "It looks... deserted! It's terrible!"

"It's eight o'clock in the evening, Angel. I'm sure you'll sleep here if you're dead tired."

"You should see it for yourself then, Bunny Boo!"

"Well, mobile's out of use, there's no signal..." Jade stated, soon flipping the pinkish hood of her mobile shut. It was one of those flip-up mobiles, after all.

"I see you've fixed the power problem." The old man noted, closing the entrance door behind him as he entered the main lobby within seconds.

There was a reason for everything, there really was. The sun shines and thus provides not only brightness but also warmth for the world, whilst the earth spins and provides a home for all life to evolve. However, the old man was not hoping for these four girls to just secure themselves a bed for a few nights, but he wanted something in return for fixing their truck's engine at least. This town was dying faster than frogs on a freeway, was it not?

"This place isn't exactly a palace, is it?"

"...You can say that again!" Sasha nodded in agreement.

"There's never been more than one guest a month, you see. There was never really any reason to clean this place up."

"Ah, so that's why!"

"But that's backwards thinking! If you want the guests, you gotta clean the place up! Pick up the trash, vacuum the place..."

Confused by his statement, Cloe and Jade simply glanced at one another whilst shrugging their shoulders.

"...What exactly are you suggesting?" Sasha asked, slanting her head to one side somewhat as she kept a palm pressing against her hip, not

only was she confused but she was also worried. Sasha could sense something odd, although she never wanted to make assumptions in case they were not true.

"If I'm gonna fix your truck, you're gonna have to vacuum this hotel."

"I think that's a fair trade, actually." Yasmin nodded with a small smile, glancing from Sasha and then towards Cloe. "It'll give us something to do at least!"

"...Is that all?" Jade questioned.

"What's this about the owner of the hotel wanting to skip town?!" An unfamiliar voice snapped, as a business man soon entered the lobby in a huff, he was furious.

"He's already gone." The old man stated.

"Without a functioning hotel we'll be done for!"

"Well, you did just say you only had one guest a month, so..." Sasha interrupted.

"Hmn, what about these kids? I'm sure they'll give a hand by taking over the hotel for a while."

"...WHAT?" Cloe spat.

"Ah, if you kids can, that'll be a real help!"

"Think about it for a sec," Yasmin started, turning to face Sasha beside her, and thus attracting the other two girls' attention as well. "If we become the temporary managers for this hotel, we could get creative and even decorate the place." Yasmin added with a grin now widening along her cherry-pink lips, soon shooting a glance in Cloe's direction. "Angel, you could work on your artistic skills!" Now facing Jade. "Kool Kat, you could design some funky uniforms for us to wear!" Now flicking a glimpse towards Sasha. "Bunny Boo, you could figure out a way to create some groovy hip-hop tunes for the hotel's music. How does that sound? Does that sound okay with you three?"

"Oh, I'm in!" Cloe perked up.

"Me too, Pretty Princess!"

"Count me in, as well!"

"That's great!" Yasmin chimed in excitement, moments before facing the two males with a cheerful beam painted upon her features. "Okay what's the first task on the list?"

"All right! Listen, we're in trouble here. This hotel is one of the only sources of money in this town. If it goes under, the town goes with it." The business man explained, or he was a supposed business man in fact. "Please, if you could help us we could turn this dingy dormitory into a world-class palace of leisure. People would have a reason to stay, they would also feel safe here, and we would be working as a team."

"That would be grand. We could get a pool, a couple lounges, a cafe, maybe an art gallery, and perhaps..." The old man blabbered on, beginning to drift off into a daydream.

"...A mall?" Cloe suggested with a smile upon her pinkish lips now.

"And maybe a music store?" Sasha hinted.

"A copy of Dynamic Design would be great here!" Jade remarked with a quick nod.

"Oh, and what about a Sweet Tooth store? Or maybe even a Cakewalk store, like the one back in Stylesville! I could really do with some yummy snacks!"

"Don't forget a smoothie bar, Pretty Princess!" Jade noted with a wink. "I wouldn't mind having a refreshing strawberry smoothie after my hard work here!"

Cloe hummed in agreement, squirming somewhat with excitement at the mere thought of it. Along with strawberry-flavoured smoothies, all she could think about was Thai Curry and slices of Pizza. After all, Cloe was a typical daydreamer.

"Good thinking, kids!" The business man interrupted. "Well, whenever you're ready to start, I suppose!"

"Wait... who even are you, anyway?" Sasha asked.

"Me? I'm known as the town's Mayor." He responded. "You can call me Philip Dean, or Mr. Dean. What are your names, girls?"

"I'm Cloe!" Cloe raised her hand excitedly, giggling as she did so.

"I'm Jade!"

"I'm Yasmin, and this is Sasha!" Yasmin pointed towards the dark-haired female beside her, smiling.

"Hey, girl! I can speak for myself, you know!" Sasha pouted a little.

"Together we're known as Bratz!" Cloe chimed as she stated.

"Cloe," Performing a slight nod in her direction, moments before shooting a glance towards Jade beside her. "Jade," Now flicking a quick look towards Yasmin, he repeated another nod. "Yasmin," Finally noting the third female, the man now glanced to Sasha standing beside her. "And Sasha, follow me. I want to show you where you'll be staying for the meantime."

"Ooo, this'll be great!" Cloe squeaked, totally forgetting about tonight's musical held in South America. Her mind was fixed on this opportunity now, and she was dead excited about it. Managing an old hotel with her best-friends sounded like a dream come true, not to mention even being able to decorate it.

Now guiding the four girls towards a set of nearby double doors, he allowed the Bratz to enter the extent by kindly holding the door open for them. "So here's the Manager's Suite... your home base. You've got the basics to start with -- a bed, a shower, a fridge of necessary food, etc -- but you can decorate this place however you like." Philip explained, browsing from Cloe to Sasha once more. "So get to know the place before you get to work. Relax, and remember to take it easy." Philip smiled. "I'll come to check on you four in the morning, would around ten o'clock be okay?"

"That sounds like a perfect plan already!" Yasmin agreed, holding both her hands together excitedly.

It was now time to get creative for sure, after fulfilling a good night's rest of course.

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